



The Rafiki Foundation, Inc.

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Today, as our ninety-eight children waited for a small group of visitors from a local church to arrive bringing with them some donations, they sang song after song in praise to the Lord, in competition with the thunderous rain coming down outside. Their beautiful voices and African rhythm were more than enough to create a spirit of joy inside. When the visitors arrived, Julie explained to them that "rafiki" means friend in Swahili and just as this church is our *rafiki*, we wanted to share with them a song about how Jesus is our "rafiki" as well. The children and mothers stood and sang "Jesus! What a Friend of Sinners!" It has ministered to many of us in the Village recently and we hope it will help us share with you in this newsletter.

Jesus! What a Friend of Sinners! Jesus! Lover of my soul: friends may fail me, foes assail me, he my Savior, makes me whole.

None of these children on their own chose to come to live at Rafiki. In fact, if the truth be known, they would have stayed put in the familiarity of their villages rather than face the strangeness of the Rafiki Village complete with foreigners! But because of the compassion of Christ they were brought out of a life of helplessness, in which life assailed them, to one of hopefulness. They can say with assurance that Jesus is the lover of my soul and the One who makes me whole. What stranger would come in to our Village and say, "Oh, these poor orphans!"? "None" would be the answer.



JONAH PLANTING A TREE

Jesus! What a help in sorrow! While the billows o'er me roll. Even when my heart is breaking, he, my comfort, helps my soul.

Life at Rafiki contains its own share of the "billows" of life. Recently the Home Office decided, and we fully supported the decision, to make all of the cottages either all girls or all boys. This was in order to provide the safest environment that we could for the children. This meant that half of our children would be moving to different cottages and that all of our mothers would be sending off some of the children for whom they have been caring. God showed Himself so faithful and so good as the mothers came to terms with this decision. Their minds saw the wisdom but their hearts were breaking at the thought of "giving up" some in their house. Jesus was their comfort as we shed tears together, as they encouraged one another, and as we prayed together that we would be prepared to help the children. We were able to assure the children (and ourselves!) that we were still together, just a cottage away and that we would have more opportunities to love one another. On moving day, children rushed to the other cottages to help their siblings bring their things to their new home with new siblings, new beds, and new places to sit at the table. A few children dragged their feet but by the end of the day even those children had smiles on their faces.



AARON'S BIRTHDAY WITH RAFIKI MOTHER MARY

Hallelujah! What a Savior! Hallelujah! What a Friend! Saving, helping, keeping, loving, he is with me to the end.

Unfortunately, two Rafiki Mothers did not want to continue as a result of these changes and left the Village. God had already made provision for this: our two substitute mothers willingly agreed to stay in these houses until long-term mothers could be hired, mothers' assistants agreed to help cover the mother's time off until new substitutes could be trained and two new substitutes came to start training that very day! (We may have a third come next week.) Of course, Julie spent time with the children in those two houses reassuring them of our love and Jesus' love for them "to the end." "Yes, Auntie" was the calm response. What a joy and a privilege to be their friend in the name of Jesus: giving those extra hugs, lending a listening ear, answering a never ending supply of questions, and showing interest in what they are doing whether it is math, football, or weeding.



REBEKAH AND SUBSTITUTE MOTHER RUTH

We want to be here! As Headmaster, David oversees twelve national and ROS (Rafiki Overseas Staff) teachers from Preschool through JSS (Junior Secondary School) One (seventh grade). He is also substitute teacher and has spent this week filling in for the Primary Four teacher who is recovering from surgery. Julie oversees the work of the ten Rafiki Mothers and is training the two new substitutes. We hope to bring in two little girls THIS MONTH to bring our total to 100!

Pray for God to make the way for Esther and Christabel to come soon. They have both been on the waiting list nearly one year. *Pray for God to provide five committed women to be full-time Rafiki Mothers, both in the cottages where there are long-term subs and so we can open our last two cottages.*



VICTORY CELEBRATION AFTER
THE "RAFIKI SUMMER OLYMPICS"

Pray for God to provide the funds for our family to continue with this work. This summer we had 50% of the funds needed for our current two-year term. If you receive this newsletter and have never given financially, would you consider doing so at this time? Is there a need for this work? Unquestionably. Staff members attended funerals for two friends who died in childbirth this week. The problems here make the price of gasoline pale in comparison. More importantly, the biblical mandate to look after orphans and widows in their distress is clear and repeated, and not just for those on the field. Please continue to join us in this amazing work.

the Pederson family

In the goodness of the Lord,

David and Julie Pederson
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